

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4233

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

USUN NEW YORK 1217

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT WA SF

SUBJ: NAMIBIA: DATE SET FOR WINDHOEK BY-ELECTION

REF: PRETORIA 168

1. PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION TO FILL VACANT WINHOEK SEAT IN SOUTH AFRICAN HOUSE CAUSED BY RESIGNATION OF FORMER CABINET MINISTER A.H. DUPLESSIS (REFTEL), WILL TAKE PLACE MAY 26. DUPLESSIS RESIGNED EARLIER IN YEAR TO TAKE OVER AS HEAD OF WHITE DELEGATION TO TURNHALLE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. OFFICIAL NOMINATION DAY WILL BE APRIL 20, BUT PARTIES CONTESTING ELECTION HAVE ALREADY CHOSEN CANDIDATES.

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2. NATIONAL PARTY (NP) CANDIDATE IS CHRIS J. MOUTON, A

WINDHOEK LAWYER AND ELECTED MEMBER OF THE SA SENATE, HIS ONLY OPPOSITION WILL BE FAR-RIGHT HERSTIGTE NASIONALE PARTY (HNP) CANDIDATE SAREL BECKER, A LAWYER AND THE HNP'S SECRETARY AND ORGANIZING OFFICER IN THE TERRITORY. FEDERAL PARTY (FORMERLY KNOWN AS UNITED PARTY) EARLIER ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD NOT NOMINATE CANDIDATE BECAUSE THE PARTY IS OPPOSED TO FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS. PROGRESSIVE-REFORM PARTY IS VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT IN THE TERRITORY AND IS NOT LIKELY TO CONTEST THE ELECTION. HNP APPARENTLY PLANS TO WAGE STIFF CAMPAIGN AND HAS BEEN HOLDING RALLIES AND DISTRIBUTING PAMPHLETS FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS.

3. COMMENT: A NUMBER OF KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS IN WINDHOEK ARE PREDICTING THAT THE CITY'S ENGLISH AND GERMAN NEWSPAPERS WILL SUPPORT WHAT IN ESSENCE IS THE FEDERAL PARTY'S CALL FOR A BOYCOTT OF THE ELECTION. KURT DAHLMANN, EDITOR OF THE INFLUENTIAL GERMAN PAPER AND ONE-TIME STAUNCH NP SUPPORTER, HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF WHAT HE CALLS "THE GOVERNMENT'S HAMHANDED AND DAWDLING APPROACH" TO THE TERRITORY'S PROBLEMS, AND HAS QUESTIONED IN PRINT THE HOLDING OF THE ELECTION. ADVERTISER EDITOR J.M. SMITH HAS ALSO STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE ELECTION, WHICH HE DESCRIBES AS "A MEANINGLESS FARCE, BUT ONE WHICH COULD DO GREAT HARM". BOTH DAHLMANN AND SMITH ARE WAITING ONLY FOR PUBLISHER'S GO-AHEAD BEFORE CALLING FOR BOYCOTT. NATIONAL PARTY UNDOUBTEDLY WILL WIN ELECTION, BUT SIZE OF HNP VOTE AND PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE ABSTAINING SHOULD GIVE SOME INDICATION OF GENERAL MOOD OF WINDHOEK'S WHITES. BOWDLER

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